

***TOWN OF NEWFIELDS BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2007***

The meeting was called to order at 6:33pm. Selectmen present were: Michael Woodworth, James McIlroy, and Wes Moore. Others present were: Road Agent Brian Knipstein, John Crisp, Town Planner Clay Mitchell, and Alison Watts of the Conservation Commission.

Wes asked Brian Knipstein to attend the Selectmen's Meeting to discuss the parking ban signs posted around town. The hours currently posted are incorrect and should be changed to 11pm to 6am. Wes would also like mention made to contact the Police Department if you are unable to abide by the ban. New signs would cost approximately \$100. each. James asked if Brian could just change the current signs with new numbers and Brian will look into this. The other Selectmen feel that there are enough notices around reminding residents to call the Police Department if they need to park during the ban and this information does not need to be included on the signs.

Brian presented his 2008 proposed Highway Budget to the Selectmen. The increase in the budget request is due to the increase in oil prices and the paving scheduled for 2008. This affects all parts of his budget from general maintenance to road paving and he has no control over this. The information was passed on to the Budget Advisory Committee and Brian will meet with them soon.

Brian gave an estimate of \$25,000. to \$30,000. to re-build the retaining wall at Badger Park. The current wall is falling down and earth is encroaching on the abutting property. Brian indicated that the price could be lowered if only a portion of the wall is re-built. The Selectmen would like the entire wall to be fixed to put the issue to rest. The Selectmen indicated to Brian that they will find an area for the granite blocks and/or rocks that will be removed from the area when the wall is re-built. They also asked Brian to obtain prices from other vendors for the cement blocks that will be used for the retaining wall. Brian will do so. This will appear as a Warrant Article in 2008.

John Crisp stopped in at the meeting to introduce himself. He is the newest member of the Budget Advisory Committee. He has a background in banking and is interested in serving the community. He has lived in Newfields for three years, has children in the elementary school, and plans to stay in town. Wes mentioned that other open positions in town are: Planning Board Member, eventually a Town Treasurer, perhaps Deputy Treasurer falling into the Town Treasurer position later on, volunteer firefighter, or volunteer EMT. John will take these into consideration at a future date.

Clay Mitchell prioritized his duties as Town Planner and will work to complete the Capital Improvement Plan first. He will work on the Master Plan after completing the CIP. Both of these plans were last implemented in 2001. He asked if the Selectmen are ready to fund flat reserve accounts for the projects – the Selectmen are not, they are looking for preliminary information only. They also feel some debts need to be retired before CIP funding is put into place. Clay will focus on impact fees to make sure they are fair and equitable.

The town has an impact fee in place, but not the methodology. The SAU work is not included in the CIP. There is a text formula for impact fees, but the Selectmen must approve the methodology and then the fees can be set.

With regard to the cell tower expansion, Clay is waiting for word from the owner that the outstanding items have been corrected so that he may re-inspect and issue permission for a building permit to be issued.

Clay presented an update on the sign ordinance. Right now the Selectmen can regulate signs in the town's right of way and on town property. In addition, NH RSA236:29 states that the "highway agent of any city or town may remove all obstructions on any other highway and on town maintained portions of class II highways." The Selectmen may ask the State for permission to remove signs in the State's right of way for any reasonable obstruction. The Selectmen will need to write the temporary ordinance and read it three times in public before it take effect. James would like to have a time limit for temporary signs such as those for yard sales, auctions, etc.

Real Estate for sale signs on properties for sale are currently allowed as are contractor signs on property while they are working on the premises. Political signs have their own state regulations.

Clay will write up some opinions and give them to the Selectmen to review.

Alison Watts attended the meeting to speak about the Prime Wetlands project. The study was completed last year, but was not put on a Warrant Article for a vote. The Conservation Commission supports designating Prime Wetlands in Newfields and will ask the Planning Board to put together a Zoning Ordinance for 2008. At this point the Planning Board understands the process, but is not sure that they are ready to back the plan. A public meeting will be held on November 26th, 2007 at 7:00pm at the Town Hall to discuss this.

At this time, the Conservation Commission is asking that tiers 1 and 2 be designated as Prime Wetlands. They are not asking that tier 3 be included. This is based on the recommendation of Mark West.

The environment must be protected, especially the water supply and the areas around them. Tidal areas should also be protected.

After viewing the various maps, the Selectmen, Clay Mitchell, and Alison Watts feel that tier 1 definitely needs the designation. Out of the areas listed on tier 2, the tidal areas should be included, but the other areas do not seem to have the same value for the impact. All feel that tier 3's inclusion in the designation is not necessary.

Alison informed the Selectmen that no public hearings have been held on this issue to date, but they are scheduling a hearing for December 20th, 2007. Working sessions will be held with the Planning Board on November 26th and December 6th. These working sessions are open to the public.

Four other towns are voting on this in 2008 and the DES wants to have information available for all residents of those four towns during a one day session. DES does not want to have to explain the process to the towns individually.

James advised Alison to have a good education and information program ready for the public. There is a need to convince the voters that this is a good decision to protect the water supply and Great Bay.

Alison will put together a list of FAQs and obtain answers from DES to have available at the Public Hearing. James suggested including the number of applications made to DES, the number approved, the number denied, and the number approved with stipulations.

Alison does not foresee any problem with the Prime Wetlands designation being passed. As an example, she mentioned that the Hydric A soil setbacks were recently increased without a fight.

James asked Clay if he had any issues with the proposed contract between the Town and MG Planning Consultants. There are no issues and James will have the contract ready for signature at a future Selectmen's Meeting.

Wes asked Clay to confirm that Reuben agreed to work with him on the transition to Town Planner and Clay agreed that was true. Wes asked if Clay had contacted Reuben – Clay did not and Reuben has not contacted Clay.

The Board stated that they are pleased with Clay's professionalism and his attention to detail.

Reuben called the office during the Selectmen's Meeting in response to a recent letter sent to him. His wife, Liesl, read the letter to him and Reuben was upset by the tone of the letter and its contents. Reuben said he was not aware that the Selectmen were waiting for a telephone call from him. He had spoken with Wes about the ramp and with Brian Knipstein about the grading around the ramp. Reuben felt all that was left for him to complete on the ramp was the fascia.

Reuben said he also spoke with Sue at the Town Office, Bill Meserve of the Planning Board and a number of applicants and does not understand why the Selectmen couldn't reach him.

Wes stated that Reuben did not call him back and several e-mails were not replied to. The items promised in his resignation letter were not completed. Reuben again stated that he was not happy with the tone of the letter and his biggest concern is not the money owed. He has not looked at his letter since he sent it to the Selectmen and has been remiss in taking care of the open items.

The Selectmen feel they have reached out several times with no response and that is why the letter was sent. It did have the desired affect of prompting Reuben to get in touch with them.

The Selectmen will take care of the fascia on the ramp but asked when they can expect information on the following promised items:

1. Revised sign ordinance for the March 4th Warrant
2. Capital Improvement Program
3. Hazardous Mitigation Plan
4. Route 108 re-zoning

The above information is needed for the new Town Planner, Clay Mitchell. Reuben advised that he will have the information ready for the next Selectmen's Meeting on November 27th.

The Selectmen said that an applicant was questioning the charge for an application review and asked what is included in a review. Reuben advised that the following items are usually included:

1. engineering review
2. research prior plan at the Town Office
3. legal issues such as deeds and planning issues

Meetings are not invoiced to the individual – that is included in the monthly fee charged by the Town Planner. There are no written procedures for reviews as each plan is different. James stated that any written review should be in the file. James then asked for one paragraph only summarizing what is contained in a review in a general way.

The Board realizes that the invoices not paid were for Planning Board issues and not Selectmen issues (not a monthly Town Planner fee). They will expect a letter from Reuben next week.

Reuben apologized for not returning the calls, but thought that speaking with Brian Knipstein took care of the issue.

James mentioned that there is a physician in town who may be interested in becoming the Public Health Officer.

Wes spoke with Chief Reed about the disability insurance. This item is on hold for the time being.

The Selectmen reviewed Health Insurance rates from Primex, the Local Government Center, Michael St. Gelais of Foye Insurance, and Lynne Sweet of Perkins Insurance. James made a motion to continue with the existing Health Insurance Plan with Primex. Wes seconded the motion and the motion passed with all in favor.

Michael made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 20th, 2007 meeting as amended. James seconded the motion and the motion passed with both in favor. Wes abstained from voting as he did not attend that meeting.

Checks were signed.

Letters to the full-time employees regarding health and dental insurance were signed.

The NH DRA Review of Tax Rate was reviewed. No changes were made.

Correspondence from the Lane Law Offices was reviewed.

The audit findings were reviewed. Nancy was asked to search the conservation land purchase files for information on the grants and forward it to Plodzik and Sanderson for their review and comments.

The ZBA Legal Notice was reviewed with regard to an application submitted by Alex Ross.

The NES Sitework Survey was reviewed.

Correspondence from the Epsom Board of Adjustment was reviewed.

Item g. on the Open Items list (Discretionary Easement) was removed.

At 10:15pm the meeting went into a non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Spencer
Administrative Assistant

